



Intelligence Information Cable

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19 22 49 FEB 69

CITE

DIST 19 FEBRUARY 1969

COUNTRY ARAB STATES/ISRAEL/GREECE/ITALY/France

DOI 23 JULY 1968 - 14 FEBRUARY 1969

SUBJECT ALLEGED IDENTIFICATION OF FEDAYIIN UNIT RESPONSIBLE FOR ACTIONS

AGAINST ISRAELI EL AL AIRLINERS IN ROME AND ATHENS

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SOURCE

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2. THE GEORGE HABBASH FACTION OF THE PFLP PLANNED AND EXECUTED THE TWO FEDAYIIN OPERATIONS AGAINST ISRAELI AIRLINERS IN 1968. WHILE THE PFLP HAS BEEN TEMPORARILY DIVERTED FROM FURTHER RAIDS OF THIS TYPE BECAUSE OF ITS INTERNAL SQUABBLES, THE HABBASH WING REMAINS THE LARGEST IN THE PFLP AND THE ONE MOST CAPABLE OF EFFECTIVE COMMANDO ACTIVITY OUTSIDE OF THE ARAB STATES. ON 10 FEBRUARY THE HABBASH FACTION DISTRIBUTED A FOUR-PAGE PFLP PAMPHLET IN AMMAN ATTACKING THE MARXIST GROUP OF HAWATAMAH. THE PAMPHLET CLAIMED TO BE THE PRODUCT OF

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THE PFLP "OF THE 707," A REFERENCE TO THE ACTIONS AGAINST EL AL.

3. ONE MAJOR DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE LEADING PALESTINIAN COMMANDO ORGANIZATION AL-FATAH (PALESTINE NATIONAL LIBERATION MOVEMENT) AND THE PFLP HAS BEEN OVER THE QUESTION OF OPERATING OUTSIDE OF ISRAEL. AL-FATAH LEADERS INSIST THAT ALL COMMANDO EFFORTS MUST BE DIRECTED INSIDE OF ISRAEL AND THE ARAB AREAS OCCUPIED BY ISRAEL. THEY BELIEVE THAT FEDAYIIN ACTIONS OUTSIDE, SUCH AS IN ROME AND ATHENS, HURT THE PALESTINIAN RESISTANCE IMAGE ABROAD. THE PFLP, ON THE OTHER HAND, ARGUES THAT ITS ATTACK ON THE EL AL AIRLINER IN ATHENS HELPED THE INTERNATIONAL POSITION OF THE PALESTINIAN RESISTANCE MOVEMENT BY PROVOKING THE ISRAELI COUNTER-RAID ON BEIRUT INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT WHICH BADLY TARNISHED ISRAEL'S INTERNATIONAL IMAGE AND, MORE IMPORTANTLY, PROVOKED THE FRENCH ARMS EMBARGO AGAINST ISRAEL. THE PFLP ARGUES THAT NO OTHER SINGLE OR COLLECTIVE FEDAYIIN EFFORT HAS ATTAINED SUCH OVERALL SUCCESS. BUT DESPITE THIS DISAGREEMENT ON TACTICS, AL-FATAH LEADERS GENERALLY SYMPATHIZE WITH THE HABBASH FACTION IN THE INTRA-PFLP DISPUTE.

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